## STATUS OF AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1. (currently amended): Apparatus for enhancing solubility of a solute in a solvent, the apparatus comprising a solvent and/or solute inlet having a fluidising unit <u>provided with a single series of tangential slots</u> which creates one vortex of rotating flow in the solvent and/or solute between the fluidising unit and a discharge pipe.
- 2. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which a fluid interfacial or boundary layer exists within the vortex where enhanced mass transfer, or dissolution of solute into the solvent takes place.
- 3. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the solute is leached from a carrier ore.
- 4. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 3, in which means are provided to achieve at least two stages of leaching, targeted at different solutes to be dissolved in different solvents.
- 5. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the solute is salt and the solvent is water.
- 6. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the solute is an edible or potable solute for use in a solution for the food and brewing industry.
- 7. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, for use in accelerated malting of materials for the brewing industry.
- 8. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, for accelerated dissolving of materials selected from the group consisting of sugars, glucoses and cola nuts for use in the soft drinks industry.

- 9. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, for pressurised rapid wetting of seeds prior to sowing, to accelerate germination and growth.
- 10. (original): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, for pressurised treatment of seeds with fungicides, nutrients, fertilizers and/or pesticides prior to sowing.
- 11. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the fluidising unit operates on a continuous flow of solvent and/or solute.
- 12. (currently amended): Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a flow chamber having a fluid inlet and a fluid outlet and at least one tangential slot.

13-20. (canceled)